

revealing how the Luyia navigated the polarized landscape of the Mau Mau Emergency. Here, MacArthur questions the accepted, but too discrete, colonial and scholarly categories which dichotomize loyalists and militants. While *Cartography and the Political Imagination* does not suggest a new periodization for twentieth century African history and remains largely within a colonial timeframe, this work makes significant contributions to some of the most studied questions in the Kenyan colonial historiography.

The afterword gestures to the wider implications of the study, emphasizing the various alternative political imaginations in existence during African decolonization. MacArthur concludes that such plurality might offer a way forward in the creation of ‘peaceful, multi-ethnic nationalisms’ (231). That such a conclusion might be too optimistic and that the Luyia’s nativist cosmopolitanism might be somewhat unique is, perhaps, unimportant. The broader insight of this work is that African communities have engaged in identity production in a range of complex ways that scholars have yet to fully explore and understand. This is a smart, engaging study which challenges and contributes to our understanding of key questions in African history.

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NAIROBI'S LITTLE MOGADISHU

Little Mogadishu: Eastleigh, Nairobi's Global Somali Hub.

By Neil Carrier.

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Key Words: urban, Kenya, ethnicity, transnational.

Neil Carrier’s *Little Mogadishu: Eastleigh, Nairobi's Global Somali Hub* is a fine example of African urban anthropology that is also inflected by insights from migration studies, diaspora studies, and transnationalism more generally. While most studies of African cities slide easily into the categories of ethno-history or of crisis-management policy studies, Carrier’s is different in that his account of Eastleigh, this deservedly famous Somali hub in Kenya’s capital, Nairobi, is sensitive to the variegated character of ethnicity but it also offers many potentially useful policy insights about urban and development planning.

We find in *Little Mogadishu* the layered history of Somalis in Nairobi, from the earliest recruits who served as military auxiliaries for Henry Stanley, and who resolutely refused to be classed as Africans, to the various Kenyan Somalis who began moving into the area from roughly the 1960s, to the Somalia refugees in the 1980s and 1990s who gave the estate (or neighbourhood) its current commercial character. But this account is not merely a local history. Carrier not only shows how much this hub depends on the international spread of the Somali diaspora in places as far-flung and different as Minneapolis, London, Hong Kong, Dubai, and Cardiff, but also demonstrates the significance of the

interplay between different global phenomena such as remittances, shipping, and regional cross-border smuggling on the shaping of Eastleigh.

The story Carrier tells is as much a Nairobi, or African, story, as it is a transnational one. What he describes, for instance, as the spatial morphology of Eastleigh and its environs has a specifically colonial and postcolonial imprint that can also be discerned in other African cities. Nairobi was spatially segregated according to racial classifications, with the area that later came to be called Eastleigh (Nairobi East and the Egerton Estate) originally being a largely Asian enclave. Because the estate was some distance from Nairobi's centre, it suffered from the slow provision of social amenities such as electricity, water, and motorable roads for much of the colonial period. The area became more Africanized after independence, when a large portion of the Asian community in Kenya opted to sell or lease their properties and leave the country, such that by 1970 the place was predominantly African in character. The potential for Eastleigh's commercial growth was discussed by the city council in 1968 and 1984, and in 1989 a policy was developed to 'accommodate low-level commercial activities that could not find a place at the CBD [the central business district]' (49).

The analysis of urban spatial differentiations according to race that Carrier carries out for Nairobi and Eastleigh (which was sometimes justified in the name of public health) can be replicated for Accra, Lagos, Johannesburg, and Luanda and others during the colonial period. But perhaps even more instructive from this account is what it reveals about the implicit interaction between International Monetary Fund structural adjustment policies of the 1980s, the freeing up of local financial regulatory frameworks and the concomitant facilitation of the flow of both local and international capital, and the transformations that all of these processes produced in urban space. Here we are obliged to shift from looking at the racial segregation of neighbourhoods to examining the spatial morphologies of urban geographies. This process is best understood in terms of the blurring that takes place between residential and commercial land use in expanding African cities.

The conversion of urban spatial morphologies as an instantiation of urban transformation has not been much remarked upon in studies of African cities. But Carrier lays out quite splendidly some of the ways we might start to think of this collocation in his description of the process by which the 'mallings' phenomenon takes place in Eastleigh from the 1990s onwards. In this particular respect, the history of Garissa Lodge (both Old and New) ought to be studied as an example of how global capitalism and local and transnational migration reconfigure urban spatial morphologies. As Carrier tells it:

Some of Eastleigh's refugees had come with enough assets to survive for a while, but soon turned to trade to make a living.

The earliest to do so stayed at Garissa Lode, then a two-storey building built by Indians several decades ago, but owned in the early 1990s by a Swahili man, and a place now synonymous with the Eastleigh transformation. These Garissa Lode guests would deck out their rooms like shops during the day, storing the clothes again at night under their beds, as had earlier traders in Isiolo (60-61).

While nominally a lodging, its small bedroom shops gave it the feel of a bazaar, and bore resemblance to the clothes section of Mogadishu's Bakaara Market, where there were around 500 clothes stalls by 1990, a resemblance enhanced by the fact that a number of

the Garissa Lodge traders had been traders at Bakaara. As its fame grew and more rooms and corridors became taken over by the trade, it was perhaps only a matter of time before the lodging became converted into a mall. By 1992, after the spilling over into neighbouring buildings, it was renamed the Garissa Lodge Shopping Centre. The renovated buildings contained ninety-two shops inside, and a further ninety-two stalls on wooden structures around the outside of the mall (61, 62).

A devastating fire in 2000 gave the owners of Garissa Lodge the opportunity to undertake expansion of the original building and, 'like the proverbial phoenix, New Garissa Lodge emerged from the fire with over 120 shops over three storeys' (64–5). The combination of the trading orientation of the early Somali refugee residents of the lodge, the accessibility of informal trade networks across the border, and the flexibility of the construction industry in Nairobi meant that what started out as the informal repurposing of the first Garissa Lodge into a mall was replicated and magnified across the entire area.

Importantly, the escalation and re-scaling of a specifically local spatial morphology that transforms a largely residential neighbourhood into a buzzing commercial district does not necessarily follow established land use regulations. Rather, such changes force urban planners to follow the money, as it were, and adjust the land use regulations to those new articulations and practices. This process is an example of what David Harvey describes as a 'spatial fix', but it takes place in Eastleigh a way that he could not possibly have envisaged.¹ However, it is precisely because the commercial transformation of the original spatial morphology does not proceed in step with established land use regulations, but rather ignores them completely, that these new commercial areas continue to suffer a wide lack of amenities. Poor roads, fragile water and sewage systems, and an intermittent and failing electricity grid are still endemic problems in Eastleigh and those failings are the price that is exacted upon the residents of the estate for the failure of overall long-term planning as urban planners cede authority to the designs of capital. Of course, one might also argue that it is because of the colonial legacy of racialized spatial segregation and the corresponding lack of state and municipal investment in developing non-European areas that places like Eastleigh were always vulnerable to being victims of this planning deficit. Eastleigh's phenomenal expansion only conceals a more endemic set of problems. Notably, the gap between commercial expansion and the provision of urban amenities can also be seen in places such as Oxford Street in Accra, which curiously also emerged as a lively commercial district in the same period as Eastleigh, even if in its case it was not the hub of refugee-driven urban development. The point is that the 'informalization' of urban planning driven by capital and the entrepreneurial spirit of individuals may also plant the seeds of potential disaster in the long term.

There are many elements that make *Little Mogadishu* an exemplary study. The discussion of trust-based negotiations and the protocols for 'buying the key' to shops in the malls is well worth studying for what it tells us about the intricate relationship between trust-based arrangements and commerce (Chapter Two). Two things that I would have liked to see more of in this study are an exploration of the labour economies that service Eastleigh (who are the porters and headload carriers, for example, and where do they come from

1 D. Harvey, *The Limits to Capital* (London, 2017), 390.

and what are their aspirations?) and also a discussion of the precarity and violence that is endemic to the informal economy in many parts of Africa. One wonders how the violence that has periodically engulfed Somalia from the 1980s and that is deployed in securitization debates by the Kenyan state impacts everyday life for denizens of Eastleigh, especially for those who do not have their own shops or means of capital, but are only now striving to 'make it or die trying'. Having said that, I have no doubt that this is a book to revisit again and again. It will without a doubt become a classic in studies of the African city.

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THE WORKINGS OF TRANSPORTATION IN NAIROBI

Matatu: A History of Popular Transportation in Nairobi.

By Kenda Mutongi.

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Key Words: Kenya, urban, transport, postcolonial.

Kenda Mutongi is a master storyteller who keeps the lives and labors of ordinary Kenyans front and center. In this regard, *Matatu* does not disappoint. Firing on all cylinders, Mutongi speeds us through political and cultural histories of post-independence Nairobi. *Matatu* is both an accessible story that will delight a curious, general audience and a complicated analysis crammed, like the backseats of a Toyota Hiace, with new ideas and directions for scholars of Africa. Drawn almost entirely from interviews, newspapers, and social media, *Matatu* is a history of the privately-owned minibuses that fill Kenya's city streets and rural roadways. Mutongi uses the matatu to write a broader history of public transport in Nairobi and creative, homegrown African urban entrepreneurship. This book reveals how Kenyans hot-wire responses to the logistical nightmares of urban life, the politics of corruption, and the uncertainties of capitalism. Mutongi examines this informal African-owned, operated, and consumed business over the course of a hundred years, and traces its gradual transformation into a ubiquitous, semi-regulated part of everyday economic and cultural life.

But Mutongi is also careful not to lionize the matatu industry. It was and remains a profoundly exploitative business, preying on the desperation of consumers trying to get back and forth from home and work, quickly and cheaply. Matatus lay at the intersection of criminality, violence, corruption, and an intensely masculine subculture. Mutongi's deft analysis captures, in effect, the fraught and ambiguous ways ordinary Kenyans feel about matatus, urban life, and national politics.

On this century-long journey, Mutongi makes a brief stop in the colonial period to offer an origin story for the city of Nairobi and its public transportation system — both of which are steeped in the racism and inequalities of settler colonialism. For Mutongi, the history of the matatu truly begins after independence, in the 1960s, as entrepreneurs, mechanics, and drivers respond to citizens' need for cheaper, more accessible transportation. During Jomo